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Congress of the United States

February 18, 1984

House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Rhode
453 James Street
New Milford, New Jersey 07646

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Rhode:

In the coming weeks, the Congress will address two critical issues that will shape America's future: securing world peace, and reducing the Federal deficit. The Reagan Administration has given us its answer to these problems. It proposes that strategic weapons systems continue to grow at an unprecedented rate, while the deficit question is left for future generations. I believe that there is a better, safer course, and I am writing to ask for your support and help in changing the direction of our national policy.

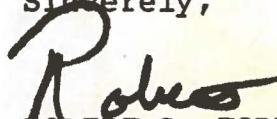
Last year, I was proud that the House passed the Nuclear Freeze Resolution. As you know, I co-sponsored that legislation and defended its passage on the floor of the House. The Freeze was an important first step toward controlling the arms race.

In addition, I was a co-sponsor of House Joint Resolution 3 that supported Senate ratification of the Threshold Test Ban and Peaceful Nuclear Explosion Treaties, and called for the resumption of the trilateral test ban treaty negotiations. You can be assured that I will work for the success of this resolution this year.

But these measures are enough. America's security depends on both improving the economy and reducing the threat of nuclear war. I have long opposed the continued development of the MX missile and the B-1 bomber because these weapons threaten, not enhance, our national security. To design our military around them is dangerous and wasteful. Rather than pouring money into these de-stabilizing weapons that inflate the Federal deficit, I believe that a credible conventional defense is our best protection against nuclear holocaust. The costs of strategic weapons leaves legitimate defense needs shortchanged. During tours of military installations last year, I saw vehicles rendered useless for lack of spare parts, and pilots grounded by a shortage of fuel. We will be more secure if we stop the hemorrhage in strategic programs and provide our conventional forces with adequate support.

We must change the course toward nuclear build-up. I am committed to aggressive negotiations to reduce the dangerous stockpile of nuclear arsenals, and to the development of a military policy that is not centered on the use of strategic weapons. Not only is this good defense policy, but it is also good economic policy. As the Congress debates these questions, I will work to reverse the answer that the Administration has proposed. National security - and world peace - depend on it. I seek your support in this effort to move America toward a safer and more secure future. Your work in organizing our citizens, communicating with Congress, and speaking out in your towns can make the difference.

Sincerely,



ROBERT G. TORRICELLI
Member of Congress

RGT:dcc